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Remarks

The Office action mailed February 26, 2004 has been carefully considered. Applicant notes, with appreciation, the allowance of claims 9-14. Reconsideration and allowance of all claims of the subject application, as amended, are respectfully requested.

Claim Amendments

Claims 1 and 15 have been amended to specifically require that the claimed at least one spur extends "axially" from an "end surface" at the second end of the claimed center contact. Axial extension of the spur was previously required by claim 3, which has been cancelled. Claims 4, 5, and 17 have been amended for consistency with amended claims 1 and 15. Claim 8 has been amended to correct a typographical error. Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1-2 and 4-22 are now in condition for allowance.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

A. Claims 1-7, 15, 17-19, 21, and 22 have been rejected under U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S Patent No. 5,489,222 to Moyer et al. (hereinafter "Moyer").

In rejecting claim 1, the Examiner states, " Moyer et al. discloses a center conductor assembly comprising: ... an inner conductor 88 comprising a first end configured to be electrically coupled to a center conductor 90 of a transmission line 12...; and a center contact 82 having a first end 84 configured to mate with a mating center contact, and a second end for electrically connecting with a second end of the inner conductor, and at least one spur 94

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adjacent the second end of the center contact 82..." The Examiner references annotated Fig. 8 of Moyer (illustrating the contact) to define the elements above.

Claims 1 and 15 have been amended to require that at least one "spur" extend "axially" from "an end surface" at the second end of the center contact. Applicant respectfully submits that Moyer does not teach an arrangement with a center contact having a first end configured to mate with a mating center contact, and a second end for electrically connecting with a second end of the inner conductor wherein at least one spur extends "axially" from an "end surface" at the second end. Moyer, instead, teaches a one-piece crimp contact with edges that extend radially from side surface of the contact. Relevant portions of Moyer read:

The contact 56, as best seen in FIGS. 8 through 11, is stamped and formed from strip stock and is on a carrier strip 80, in the usual manner. The receptacle contact 56 includes a cylindrically shaped barrel 82 having an upwardly facing slot 84 and a pair of oppositely formed dimples 86 that are arranged electrically engage the surfaces of a pin contact .... A pair of crimping tabs 88 extend outwardly from a conductor nest 92 formed in the shank of the contact adjacent the carrier strip 80 .... The edge portions 94 are integrally formed with the contact barrel and crimping tabs and extend radially outward past the outer diameter of the contact barrel, as shown. (col. 3, ll. 5-23). (**Emphasis added**).

Clearly, therefore, the edge portions 94 of Moyer extend radially outward from a side surface of a one piece contact. There is nothing in Moyer that teaches or suggests a center conductor wherein at least one "spur" extends "axially" from "an end surface" at a second end thereof, as required by independent claims 1 and 15. As such, Moyer does not anticipate independent claims 1 and 15.

Claims 2-7 are dependent on claim 1 and claims 17-19, 21, and 22 are dependent from claim 15, these claims are in a condition for allowance in view of their dependency, as well as

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for their own limitations. For example, claims 8 and 16 require an opening in the second end of the claimed center contact for receiving the second end of the inner conductor. This configuration is entirely absent from Moyer.

Applicant respectfully submits, therefore, that claims 1-7, 15, 17-19, 21, and 22 are not anticipated by Moyer, and requests that the rejection of claims 1-7, 15, 17-19, 21, and 22 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) in view of Moyer be withdrawn.

**B.** Claims 1, 8, 15, and 16 have been rejected under U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S Patent No. 5,453,025 to (hereinafter “Wilson”).

In rejecting claim 1, the Examiner states, “ Wilson discloses a center conductor assembly comprising: ... an inner conductor comprising a first end configured to be electrically coupled to a center conductor of a transmission line ...; and a center contact having a first end configured to mate with a mating center contact, and a second end for electrically connecting with a second end of the inner conductor, and at least one spur 18 adjacent the second end of the center contact ...” The Examiner references annotated Fig. 3 of Wilson (illustrating the contact) to define the elements above.

Applicant respectfully submits that Wilson does not teach an arrangement with a center contact having a first end configured to mate with a mating center contact, and a second end for electrically connecting with a second end of the inner conductor wherein at least one spur extends “axially” from an “end surface” at the second end. In fact, Wilson teaches a one-piece inner conductor with knurls 18 having raised areas 35 extending radially outward from a side surface thereof. Relevant portions of Wilson read:

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[T]he connector is similar in some respects to the above-described prior art connector, in that it includes an outer conductor having a central bore, an insulator disposed within the bore and having its own central bore, and an inner conductor disposed within the bore. (col. 3, ll. 59-63). (**Emphasis added**).

In a preferred embodiment of the present invention, a means is also provided for preventing rotation of the inner conductor 15 relative to the insulating sleeve 17. As shown in FIGS. 3-4, the inner conductor 15 is provided with a plurality of knurls 18. FIG. 9 is a cross-sectional view of the connector through one of the two sets of knurls provided on the inner conductor. As seen from FIG. 9, the knurls 18 have raised areas 35 that extend into the insulator 17 material, which deforms about the raised areas. (col. 5, ll. 40-48). (**Emphasis added**).

The knurls 18 in Wilson clearly extend radially from a one-piece inner conductor. There is nothing in Wilson that teaches or suggests a center conductor wherein at least one "spur" extends "axially" from "an end surface" at a second end thereof, as required by independent claims 1 and 15. As such, Wilson does not anticipate independent claims 1 and 15.

Claims 8 depends from claim 1 and claim 16 are depends from claim 15, these claims are in a condition for allowance in view of their dependency, as well as for their own limitations. For example, claims 8 and 16 require an opening in the second end of the claimed center contact for receiving the second end of the inner conductor. Applicant finds nothing in Wilson that teaches or suggests this configuration.

Applicant respectfully submits, therefore, that claims 1, 8, 15 and 16 are not anticipated by Wilson, and requests that the rejection of claims 1, 8, 15 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) in view of Wilson be withdrawn.

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Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claim 20 has been rejected under U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Moyer.

Claim 20 depends from claim 15 and is, therefore, allowable over Moyer for the reasons adduced above. Nonetheless, Applicant notes that in rejecting dependent claim 20, the Examiner states that Moyer fails to teach the soldering process. The Examiner takes Official Notice that both the concept and advantages of providing solder are well known and expected in the art. Applicant respectfully submits it is not appropriate to rely solely on "common knowledge" in the art without evidentiary support in the record, as the principal evidence upon which a rejection is based.

Since Moyer fails to teach soldering an inner conductor to a separate center contact, as claimed, it would not be obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to use the soldering process to electrically connect the second end of the center contact with the second end of the inner conductor. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of claim 20 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) be withdrawn.

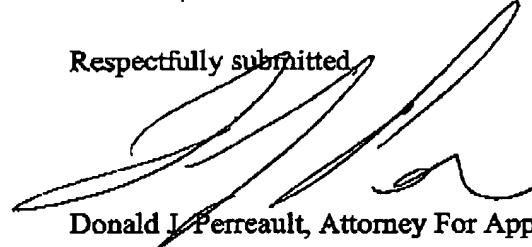
Conclusion

In light of the foregoing amendments and for at least the reasons set forth above, Applicant respectfully submits that all objections and rejections have been traversed, rendered moot and/or accommodated, and that presently pending claims 1-2, and 4-22 are in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and allowance of the present application and the presently pending claims are hereby requested. If a telephonic conference would expedite the examination of this matter, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at (603) 668-6560.

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In the event that there are fee deficiencies, or additional fees are payable, please charge or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 50-2121.

Respectfully submitted,



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